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NSA review completed

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TOHAK 06

DECEMBER 22, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER
FROM: THE SITUATION ROOM
SUBJECT: SUNDAY CABLE SUMMARY

SOVIETS STRONGLY DEFEND DETENTE POLICY AT MEETING OF COMMUNIST PARTIES: BORIS PONOMAREV, CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARY IN CHARGE OF RELATIONS WITH NON-RULING PARTIES MADE A PARTICULARLY STRONG DEFENSE OF DETENTE AT THE MEETING OF EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES IN BUDAPEST, WHICH ENDED YESTERDAY. EMBASSY MOSCOW REPORTS THAT PONOMAREV TACKLED HEAD-ON THE ARGUMENTS OF THOSE (I.E. SOME WESTERN COMMUNISTS) WHO BELIEVE THAT MOSCOW'S DETENTE POLICY IS SACRIFICING THEIR INTERESTS.

THE EMBASSY WAS WORKING WITH A FULLER TASS SUMMARY OF PONOMAREV'S REMARKS THAN IS NOW AVAILABLE IN WASHINGTON. THE TASS SUMMARY SAYS LITTLE ABOUT THE THORNY QUESTION OF COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN POPULAR FRONTS. THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE SOVIETS AND SOME WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTIES.

THE THREE-DAY MEETING IN BUDAPEST WAS ATTENDED BY 28 EUROPEAN PARTIES. IT WAS INTENDED TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR A FORMAL EUROPEAN COMMUNIST CONFERENCE NEXT YEAR IN EAST BERLIN. AT THIS STAGE IT IS UNCLEAR IF FURTHER PREPARATORY MEETINGS WILL BE NECESSARY.

THAIS ADD TO TRADE DELEGATION NOW IN CHINA: THE THAI CABINET HAS MADE A LAST-MINUTE DECISION TO STRENGTHEN THE TRADE DELEGATION BANGKOK HAS SENT TO PEKING. THE THAI DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND A PERSONAL SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER FLEW TO CHINA ON DECEMBER 20, THE SAME DAY A THAI TRADE DELEGATION ARRIVED IN PEKING FROM NORTH KOREA.

THE TWO ADDITIONAL MEN OSTENSIBLY ARE TO EXPLORE THAI-PRC AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION: THEIR INCLUSION LENDS ADDITIONAL IMPORTANCE TO THE MISSION. THE DELEGATION MAY ENGAGE IN TALKS THAT COULD LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR THAI-PRC DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
APPLY

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WHEN A NEW THAI GOVERNMENT -- TO BE ELECTED IN LATE JANUARY -- DECIDES TO MOVE ON THIS ISSUE.

SPANISH CLASH WITH INSURGENTS IN SPANISH SAHARA: THE SPANISH EMBASSY IN RABAT HAS CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT SPANISH POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES ENGAGED IN A SMALL BUT BLOODY CLASH WITH INSURGENTS RECENTLY IN NORTHERN SPANISH SAHARA NEAR THE MAURITANIAN BORDER.

ACCORDING TO THE SPANISH, SIX INSURGENTS WERE KILLED AND THREE WERE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED AND CAPTURED. SPANISH LOSSES WERE FIVE KILLED AND TEN WOUNDED. THE CLASH ALLEGEDLY TOOK PLACE WHEN A GROUP OF POLICE IN JEEPS WAS AMBUSHED NEAR THE TOWN OF TIFARTI BY MEMBERS OF THE SAHARA LIBERATION FRONT-- A SMALL INSURGENT GROUP WHICH RECEIVES SOME FINANCIAL AID FROM ALGERIA AND LIBYA.

SPORADIC, SMALL-SCALE FIGHTING HAS OCCURED IN SPANISH SAHARA FOR SOME TIME. SKETCHY EVIDENCE TO DATE INDICATES THAT MOST OF IT IS PROBABLY MOROCCAN-INSPIRED.

SOVIET-INSPIRED RUMOR OF EARLY MIDDLE EAST HOSTILITIES: THE US DEFENSE ATTACHE IN CAIRO HAS REPORTED THE DISSEMINATION TO UNISO OFFICERS THERE OF THE CLAIM BY THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN BEIRUT--ALLEGEDLY MADE TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR--THAT WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD BEGIN ON DECEMBER 24; THE USDAO HAS OFFERED HIS OPINION THAT ARAB INITIATION OF HOSTILITIES IS UNLIKELY AT THIS TIME.

THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN BEIRUT IS THE CENTER OF SOVIET AGITPROP ACTIVITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS OF THIS KIND ARE ITS STOCK IN TRADE, PARTICULARLY DURING PERIODS OF UNCERTAINTY AND TENSION.

DIA HAS SUMMARIZED SUCH HOSTILITIES INDICATORS AS ARE AVAILABLE TO THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, AND CIA HAS NOTHING TO ADD TO THE LIST.

THE EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES HAVE CONTINUED TO TAKE DELIBERATE BUT UNHURRIED MEASURES TO IMPROVE THEIR GENERAL READINESS FOR WAR. IN THE PAST MONTH WE HAVE NOTED THE FORWARD MOVEMENT OF SA-6 BATTERIES ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE SUEZ CANAL AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO PERMANENT SITES FOR SAM BATTERIES IN THE LIMITED ARMAMENTS ZONE. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE MECHANIZED INFANTRY UNITS IN THE LIMITED ARMAMENTS ZONE ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE CANAL.

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AT THE SAME TIME, EGYPTIAN POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE BEEN
TAKING EVERY OPPOTUNITY TO IMPRESS ON THE UNITED STATES THEIR
DESIRE FOR SOME VISIBLE MANIFESTATION OF PROGRESS TOWARD RESOLUTION
OF THE MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. THEIR APPARENT DISMAY AT ISRAEL'S
LATEST CONDITIONS FOR ANOTHER STEP IN THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCESS
COULD BE REFLECTED IN SOME TIGHTENING OF MILITARY ADMINISTRATION
PROCEDURES.

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